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Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

Letter dated 2 September 2015 from the Permanent Representative of Qatar to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to refer to resolution 69/315, entitled "Draft outcome document of the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda" and adopted on Tuesday, 1 September 2015, under agenda item 13 (a), entitled "Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields", and agenda item 115, entitled "Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit".

In this regard, I have the further honour to transmit herewith the text of the statement I delivered during the 101st plenary meeting of the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly on behalf of the member States of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf, which stated the reservations and observations of the Cooperation Council member States on the outcome document entitled "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", which will be transmitted for action to the Assembly at its seventieth session during the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda, to be held from 25 to 27 September 2015 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly, under agenda items 13 (a) and 115.

(*Signed*) Alya Ahmed Saif **Al-Thani**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

15-15077 (E) 090915 100915

Please recycle

Annex to the letter dated 2 September 2015 from the Permanent Representative of Qatar to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: Arabic]

Statement delivered by the State of Qatar on behalf of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf on the adoption of the draft resolution on the outcome document of the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda

1 September 2015

First of all, it gives me pleasure to speak on behalf of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf (GCC) — the United Arab Emirates, the Kingdom of Bahrain, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Sultanate of Oman, the State of Kuwait and the State of Qatar — and to thank you for convening this meeting and following up negotiations on a final document on the post-2015 development agenda which will be transmitted for action to the United Nations General Assembly at its seventieth session during the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda, to be held from 25 to 27 September 2015.

I should also like to thank the Permanent Representatives of Ireland and Kenya, as facilitators of intergovernmental negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda, for their efforts in overseeing the negotiation process and facilitating the discussions that have lasted over two years.

In light of the importance of the post-2015 development agenda, the GCC States have taken part, along with the other partners, in all the preparatory activities. We take this opportunity to express our deepest appreciation and gratitude to all those who made active contributions to the success of the consultations and shared with us their knowledge, time and expertise.

The negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda have confirmed the importance of open dialogue and efforts to narrow the gap between positions. Even so, the consultations did reveal some differences of opinion. Our member States therefore wish to clarify their positions on a number of issues that are addressed in the outcome document.

Reservations and observations of the GCC States on the outcome document of the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda

Paragraphs relating to women

The GCC States have striven to respect the rights of women, empower them and improve their status. They have fostered an image of women as the partners of men in all spheres of life when appropriate to their nature. They have also upheld all of the rights of women. However, we should like to put on the record the following reservation regarding anything that conflicts with the teachings of the Islamic sharia:

The member States of the Council express a reservation regarding the use of the expression "early marriage" and the criminalization thereof in the document. The criminalization provided for in international instruments is of "child marriage", which is also criminalized under our national laws. The GCC States reaffirm their respect for international instruments and their commitments under the treaties to which they are party.

Migrants

With regard to paragraph 29 of the document, relating to migrants:

The GCC States stress their sovereign right to implement any recommendations in a manner consistent with their national laws, in particular as regards the situation of foreign workers.

Health

With regard to paragraph 26 and Goal 5, relating to health:

The GCC States guarantee the right of all to health and provide reproductive health services to all their residents without discrimination. They also permit safe abortion, in case of medical need only, and follow demographic policies without reference to reproductive health rights or reproductive health services.

The member States of the Council express a reservation regarding aspects of reproductive rights that might conflict with the provisions of the Islamic sharia and regarding any reference, wheresoever it may appear, having to do with the terms "sexual rights", or "sexual health".

Inheritance

With regard to Goal 5a, relating to inheritance:

The policies and national laws of the GCC States respect all the rights of women. There are many cases in which a woman's entitlements are greater than those of a man. In that regard, GCC States apply the human right of inheritance to women within a framework that is consistent with the national laws of GCC States.

Right to water and sanitation

With regard to paragraph 7:

We are concerned at the weakness of the formulation relating to the right to water and sanitation, which does not meet aspirations with regard to the post-2015 development agenda, given that United Nations General Assembly resolution 68/157 recognizes the need to give due consideration to the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation in the elaboration of the post-2015 development agenda, in particular while defining concrete goals, targets and indicators, taking into account an approach that supports the promotion and protection of human rights.

Sustained and sustainable economic growth

With regard to paragraph 9:

The GCC States consider the provisions of paragraph 9 relating to sustainable and inclusive economic growth to be unclear. They stress that every country has the right to enjoy sustainable and inclusive economic growth and to make use of all natural resources in the air and on the ground, from rivers, lakes and groundwater to the oceans and seas, as well as the right to an enabling environment at the national and international levels for the realization of sustainable development.

Paragraph on human rights

The GCC States regret the failure to include the phrase "internationally recognized human rights", and stress that they will be committed to internationally recognized human rights wherever the expression "human rights" appears.

References in the document to gender

The GCC States would like to stress that references in the text to "gender" designate specifically male or female, and that references in the text to "family" designate a family founded on a marriage consisting of a union between a man and woman, which is the natural and fundamental unit that comprises a family and is the basic building block of society.

The family

The GCC States find it regrettable that the final document does not refer to the role of the family in society by addressing the rights of the family as recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. As a consequence, the document contains no explicit reference to the role of the family in the realization of sustainable development.

In closing, we reiterate all of the reservations expressed above and submit them, on behalf of the Arab Group, to the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals.